



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS  
2 NAVY ANNEX  
WASHINGTON DC 20370-5100

TRG  
Docket No: 3087-02  
28 August 2002

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to the provisions of Title 10 of the United States Code section 1552.

A three-member panel of the Board for Correction of Naval Records, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 27 August 2002. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of this Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application, together with all material submitted in support thereof, your naval record, and applicable statutes, regulations and policies.

After careful and conscientious consideration of the entire record, the Board found that the evidence submitted was insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice.

The Board found that you enlisted in the Marine Corps on 9 September 1979 at age 19. On 20 February and 7 April 1970 you received nonjudicial punishment for two periods of unauthorized absence totaling about 15 days. A special court-martial convened on 7 January 1971 and convicted you of an unauthorized absence of about 238 days. The court sentenced you to forfeitures of pay and confinement at hard labor for three months. Two months of the confinement was suspended.

On 16 November 1971 you began a period of unauthorized absence which lasted until you were apprehended on 11 October 1973, a period of about 706 days. Your military record shows that you submitted a written request for an undesirable discharge in order to avoid trial by court-martial for the 706 day period of unauthorized absence. Your record also shows that prior to submitting this request you conferred with a qualified military lawyer at which time you were advised of your rights and warned of the probable adverse consequences of accepting such a discharge. The Board found that your request was granted on 7 December 1973 and, as a result of this action, you were spared the stigma of a court-martial conviction and the potential penalties of a punitive discharge and confinement at hard labor.

The undesirable discharge was issued on 12 December 1973.

In its review of your application the Board carefully weighed all potentially mitigating factors, such as your youth and the documentation you submitted to support your claim that you have been a good citizen for many years. The Board also considered your contention that your unauthorized absences were caused by the necessity to care for your wife and three children. However, the Board found that these factors were not sufficient to warrant recharacterization of your discharge given your record of misconduct and especially your request for discharge to avoid trial for an unauthorized absence of about 706 days. The Board believed that considerable clemency was extended to you when your request for discharge to avoid trial by court-martial was approved since, by this action, you escaped the possibility of confinement at hard labor and a punitive discharge. Further, the Board concluded that you received the benefit of your bargain when your request for discharge was granted and you should not be permitted to change it now. The Board concluded that your discharge was proper as issued and no change is warranted.

Accordingly, your application has been denied. The names and votes of the members of the panel will be furnished upon request.

It is regretted that the circumstances of your case are such that favorable action cannot be taken. You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new and material evidence or other matter not previously considered by the Board. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that a presumption of regularity attaches to all official records. Consequently, when applying for a correction of an official naval record, the burden is on the applicant to demonstrate the existence of probable material error or injustice.

Sincerely,

W. DEAN PFEIFFER  
Executive Director